en a home that person was

### SOME NEW BOOKS.

An alluring task that often before has

Catherine de Medici.

been essayed but never yet has been perfectly accomplished is once more attempted in a volume entitled Catherine de Medici and the French Reformation by EDITH | SICHEL (E. P. Dutton & Co.). Not only general historians of sixteenth century France, but such special investigators as Bouchot and Capefigue, such essayists as Sainte-Beuve and Brunetibre and novelists as the elder Dumas and Balzac have tried to fathom, decipher and transfer to canvas the complex and elusive personality of the Florentine wife of the royal lover of Diane de Poitiers, of the widow and mother who for thirty years, from her husband's death in 1559 to her own demise in 1589, was to play a great part in the religious, political, social and esthetic history of France. The author of this book makes no kind of pretension to the discovery of new documents or the revelation of facts hitherto unearthed. As she justly reminds us in a preface, however, much information that exists in print is buried in the dust of libraries, and is therefore practically unknown. Even on the part of the gleaner in fields supposed to have been previously traversed an enormous amount of patience and industry is needed to go through tomes inconceivably tedious for the sake of a solitary paragraph, perhaps a solitary sentence, that may throw a coveted ray of light and serve the occasion in view. "To gather together some old fragments, to prevent waste of truth, to rescue the few vivid facts and impressions embedded in ruinous remains-still more, if possible, to cast some illumination on the characters of an age, and thus, indirectly, on its eventsthese seem aims not altogether incompatible with usefulness or with the modest means at an ordinary chronicler's disposal. Such has been the humble but worthy purpose of the indefatigable researches, the winnowed outcome of which is embodied in the book before us; nor will any candid reader personally conversant with the story of sixteenth century France deny that the object has been attained to an extent that reflects high credit on the author. There is here ample proof of the absence of prejudice or preconception, and on many a page is presented evidence of sound judgment, of an equitable spirit, of catholic sympathies, of penetration into motives and characters-in a word, of the possession of that rare gift, the historical imagination, that enables one to reproduce a remote and alien point of view and to appreciate the subtle influence of a strange moral, social and intellectual atmosphere. We add that the author has at her disposal a rich vocabulary, well adapted to nice discriminations and half tints, and is able to indicate the finer shades of thought and sentiment by means of a flexible, sensitive, translucent

We should say at once that this book would more accurately have been described as "The Youth of Catherine de Medici. for it carries us from the subject's birth in 1519 only to 1562, when, as Regent, she concluded with the Prince de Condé the socalled Peace of Amboise, which practically abolished the Protestants' liberty of worship and gave away the Protestant cause. It may be taken for granted, and it certainly is to be hoped, that the present volume will be supplemented with another dealing with the second half of Catherine's life. It is true that the woman of the next twentyseven years, lax by taste and inclination, and a bigot only by policy, is not pleasant to read of. It is also true, however, as our author says, that she is always interesting considered as a human document. We assume, then, that the story of the later Catherine de Medici, the coadjutor of Alva, the Catherine of St. Barthlomew's Eve and of the Catholic League, will likewise in due time be written, and that thus will be find much that was better than herself in find much that was better than herself in completed the record of an enigmatic and her immediate surroundings at the French abnormal personality. Meanwhile we shall endeavor to indicate at once the usefulness and the attractiveness of the work before us by outlining what is here set down concerning the three figures in the foreground: Catherine de Medici herself, Henri II., her beloved but unloving husband, and the woman whom, of all others, she had most cause to hate, Diane de Poitiers, Grande Sénéchale of Normandy and Duchess of Valentinois.

and pictorial style.

Catherina Maria Romola de' Medici was born, as we have said, in 1519 at Florence. Her father was Lorenzo of Urbino, the great nephew of Lorenzo the Magnifleent; her mother was Madeleine de Latour d'Auvergne, the child of Jeanne de Bourbon and of the Seigneur de Latour, a descendant of Geoffroy de Bouillon. Leo X. was her great uncle, and of another Medici Pope, Clement VII., she was the second cousin once removed. Hippolyte, afterward the Cardinal de Medici, who was poisoned at the age of 25, was her first cousin once removed, and Alessandro, who eventually became the infamous Duke of Florence, was her half-brother, being the illegitimate son of her father by a Moorish woman. It is thus evident that Medician craft and Medician sumptuousness, Bourbon arrogance and Bourbon dignity were born in her blood; the acuteness of Italians, the practical genius of the French were her natal dower. Her mother died at her birth; her father, decadent and worn out, followed his wife a few days later, and his mother, Alfonsina Orsini, who assumed charge of her orphan grandchild, was herself to die in the following year. The child's condition was certainly desolate, and thenceforward her life was a series of flittings from one nunnery to another until, at 11 years of age, she was conveyed to Rome, and there installed as the relation of Pope Clement VII., who was bent on making a splendid bargain of his kinswoman.

After rejecting such applicants for her hand as James V. of Scotland, Francesco Sforza. Duke of Milan and the Duke of Mantua the Pope accepted Henri, Duc d'Orléans, then second son, but destined to become the successor of Francis I. A the age of 15 she was married at Marseilles but the chief figure in the wedding pageant was not the bridegroom, still a half-fledged lad, but his father, François I., by whose dazzling personality the young Prince was eclipsed. Thus Catherine's married life She who, though so young, was already a highly cultured and polished Princess, found herself the unwished for wife of a silent, gloomy boy, who had nothing to say to her, or, as yet, for the matter of that, to anybody else. Dreary enough must have been their early life together. but worse was to come, for only three years after her marriage Catherine found herself supplanted (if indeed she ever had a place) in the heart of her husband by Diane de Poitiers, whose hold upon him remained unshakable until his death

twenty-three years later. Our author points out that in Catherine's many portraits her development may be traced from the day when she was a plump little girl of twelve, with rather heavy cheeks and prominent eyes and thick coils of hair. The bride of fifteen, the young woman of twenty to twenty-five, grows maturer in expression and improves in outlines. We are told, however,

that the Catherine of thirty to forty is Catherine at her best. "She is a beautiful woman when her face is veiled," says a contemporary writer; "I express myself thus because she is tall, her figure is elegant and her skin delicate. But as for her face, it is not at all beautiful; her mouth is too large, and her eyes big and pale." This is the queen whom Franccis Clouet drew, with lines as strong and subtle, with curves as crafty and elusive, as the character of his sitter. This portrait is reproduced in the present book with the following comment: "Catherine needed to wear no outward gauze, for there is a veiled look about her face, and the colorless eyes beneath the braids of brown hair, the full, rather hanging lips add to the mystery, the inhuman mystery, of her face." Our author adds that in the Catherine of 1572 and later all these characteristics had grown exces-"The subtlety which in earlier days sive. when fulfilment was still to come, could not fail to arouse curiosity has now lost its interest; the face is more bloodless, the cheeks and jaws heavier, while the massive double chin coarsens the whole impression. Catherine, we know, grew so unwieldy with age that she could hardly walk, and we feel that her mind also grew grosser and shut itself in, and that she even lost her cunning as a player of State chess.

If the Catherine of history has been drawn by Clouet in the picture to be seen in the Musée de Versailles, Pourbus also painted her as faithfully, and perhaps with a keener sense of the drama in which she played. The portrait by Pourbus hangs in the pasage between the Pitti Palace and the Ufizzi, and it shows us Catherine de Medici when she was about thirty years old. "The baffling eyes, the fullish lips, the long, broad forehead, the rounded cheeks are all before us. Robed in a rose-pink satin gown sown with Orient pearls, a black train flowing behind her, a jewel glowing at her breast, she stands before us as if she thought that she would endure forever. Young remote, relentless, preeminent without being great, she dominates the gallery wall to-day as she once dominated the world of her own generation."

II.

There is no attempt made in this volume to whitewash Catherine de Medici. Equity compels our author, however, to point out that crimes not her own were ascribed to her, and that she was by no means so wholly black as she has been painted. She has generally figured hitherto as a kind of feminine stage villain, a mysterious figure surrounded by astrologers and secret drawers filled with poison bottles; an effect to which the elder Dumas, and occasionally Michelet, in a day when history was still artistic rather than scientific, contributed not a little. Nowadays science has exterminated mercilessly the race of villains, and is even tending to replace them by victims of constitutional infirmities. It is here suggested that perhaps the truth in the case of Catherine, as often, lies between two extremes. On the one hand, it is admitted that "her poison cupboard at Blois, which once figured in history and is now proved to be a fable, is now but a symbol of a whole mythology that has gathered around her name." She dealt in negative evil, an instrument of mischief no less ffective-perhaps, indeed, no less deadlythan the common sort of poisonings ascribed to her. Most of the sensational accusations against Catherine are based on no solid foundation. The only murders with which she can be charged with certainty were those of Coligny and Lignerolles. She was, no doubt, a pupil of Machiavelli, but she did not, like Cæsar Borgia, carry his tenets to implacable conclusions. At all events, when she left Italy she was too young to have had much, if any, practise in harm doing, and assuredly she did not court. Diane de Poitiers and t kept a special staff of doctors at Paris to put an unobtrusive end to the owners of benefices; and Margaret of Angoulème, the patroness of the Reformers, was forced to celebrate mass in her bedroom, so as to avoid the poison which a prelate was anxious to administer to her in the Communion

Touching the indiscriminate calumnies of which Catherine has been the target, our author remarks: "We may be sure that people-especially women-must alhave seemed possible to themselves, and hence monsters are necessarily unhistorical. Hence, too, whatever work of cleansing or c'earing helps to free the picture from deposits and make it tone with its surroundings, whether to be re-lieved from layers of incrusting lampblack or whitewash, must be a work in the cause of truth. History is not written in black and white, but in subtle grays and half-tints; and studying some character from the past is often like looking at a figure in a faded fresco on which we cannot get a full light. At first we see its robes as black; then, as we search more closely and grow accustomed to the obscurity, we find that the draperies are not of one color, but of manifold, twilight shades, and it is only for the sake of convenience that we use positive terms at all. Catherine, with Medician craft in her veins, was far too diplomatic to be anything positively. Frankness, even in sin. would have been to her a breach, not of morals, but of manners."

From the evil deeds of which Catherine has been accused, but of which she must be accounted guiltless, the heinous conception of the massacre of St. Bartholomew's Eve must be excepted. It is here argued, however, that St. Bartholomew's Eve cannot be taken as a measure of Catherine's action, for the massacre was not deliberately planned, but was the outcome of her hand being forced through her own shortsightedness. She had made a mistake natural to her. She had underrated Coligny and his power, which threatened to vie with herown. From the point of view of her own interest his removal became necessary, and the Guises were but too willing to be her agents in the matter. It was when they failed to kill him and when the rumor ran that the Profestants had vowed an 'nstant and general vengeance for this plot against their chief that parie seized her. She felt that she must effectually forestall them, and the result was the massacre. This terrible deed of hers. therefore, throws no real light upon her nature, excepting that it proves that she found no bar in herself to such a business It could hard'y, however, have been the result of cold blooded premeditation, for she herself, who desired peace at almost any price, would have been the first to reject it as a blunder.

It is pronounced unlucky for Catherine that she happened to have a taste for astrology, and to have established an Italian astrologer in a tower near her room. Nothing was more natural, however. Like all her contemporaries, she had a profound belief in the influence of stars upon human lives. In her day astrologers were consulted in as commonplace a way as doctors are now; but such consultations were bound to take place in private, and love potions and magic medicaments were

ary atmosphere of moroseness. As a matter of fact, she was far from being morose. It is obvious, indeed, that, being destitute of physical beauty, and yet able to bend men and women to her will as she did. Catherine must have possessed some strange fascination. So, in truth, she did. Her real indifference to the welfare of other did not betray itself socially. "She was brilliant, acutely alive. She had French wit and Italian verve in conversation, and she must have known how to amuse, or she would not, in the early days of her marriage, have been the constant companion of the blase François I. Her wit, salt and shrewd, was of the broad, colloquial kind, well suited to cheer a jaded monarch."

She understood how to laugh; not often but aptly. "Then," wrote a Venetian envoy, "she began to laugh a great deal as she always does when something takes her fancy." Brantôme also reports: "She would laugh her fill like anybody else. She loved to say the right word, and knew how to meet people takingly." Our author doubtless hits it when she says that Catherine's power lay not so much in what she did as in her science of doing. She knew the right moment for laughing, and for weeping. She was, indeed, intensely feminine, and none grasped better than she that a woman's strength lies in her weaknees. It is not asserted in the book before us that her tears and smiles were exactly hypocritical; they were always near at hand; however. She was an Italian, and, therefore, demonstrative. While conceding that amenity was no doubt her best policy and deportment part of her creed, our author thinks that there must have been a real social amiability about her, and that a visitor at her court was probably truthful when he records that she had "a most beautiful manner, and that both in her words and her gestures she sought to please everybody." This "need of pleasing" brought her plenty of work. The innumer able letters which she wrote to plead for protégés or to get them suitable posts were a work, if not of kindness, at least of benevolence.

It also is to be noted as for her time and position a very rare achievement that Catherine de Medici should have kept her reputation intact living as she did in as age of signal immorality, when illegitimate love affairs constituted part of the normal life of almost every great lady. For a Princess to go entirely unscathed by malicious tongues would, indeed, have been impossible, but the few scandals breathed against Catherine obtained scant credence, even at the time, and manifestly were inventions of her enemies In a word, she is here pronounced the most respectable bad woman on record; but her respectability is attributed to a want of inclination, of temperament, not to any standard of conduct. That she had no moral principle is evident from her deal ings with other women, as with her "flying squadron" of attendants, for whom she deliberately planned liaisons de convenance for political purposes. "Her severity was reserved not for the crime, but for the criminal who allowed it to be found out. Before a breach of decorum or any moral clumsiness she was implacable, and the ladies who could not keep their faults to themselves were rigorously expelled from her court. Her own immunity from blame shows that she was not at any rate the slave of low impulses, but it proves no sort of moral scruple. To say that she was free from prejudice is to say little: she was incapable of forming any judgments save those dictated by persona convenience. This freedom from prejudice produces the effect to some extent real of a large mind. But the largeness that proceeds from fine proportions is one thing, that which comes from emptiness anand Catherine's mind had the of an unfurnished room in a marble palace -vast, mysterious, unlived in and perilously cold. It is true enough, as our author admits

that Catherine de Medici would be aimost intolerable to read about had she not been unhappy. Unhappy, in truth, she was, in public as in private life. Her tears were too often warranted, and the want of some one she could trust was a sore trial to her She was a very lonely woman. "I know. wrote one who saw her often, "that she has many times been found in her closes weeping; but of a sudden she hath dried her eyes, dissembled her sorrow, and, to the end that she might deceive those who would judge of the true state of affairs by the expression of her countenance, she hath shown herself to the world with a calm and joyous mien." One day, however, the Spanish envoy saw her break down. As she was coming from the Council Cham ber she took him by the hand. "Why do you smile?" said she. "Will your Majesty allow me to tell you?" "Speak!" she replied sharply. "Well, your Majesty's eyes are swollen with sleep, one would think you were waking from a dream." "It is but too true," she answered, as the tears rushed to her eyes, "I have every reason to appear dreamy, for alone and single handed I bear the burden of affairs. You would be amazed," she continued, "if you understood what has just happened. I no longer know in whom I trust." Through weal and wo, nevertheless, her dauntles spirit wore its regal armor-polished and uriously inlaid, like the Renaissance corselets in museums. "She it is," writes Correr, one of the Ambassadors from "who has preserved at court the Venice. only vestige of royal majesty which is still to be found there. That is the reason why I have ever rather pitied than blamed her. Here, again, says our author, one feels how thoroughly the Queen-Mother was a

It is well known that Catherine de Medici had abundant and abiding cause for grief. One feeling she had, apart from ambition and self-interest, one feeling that slumbered deep, like some subterranean current in her enigmatic nature, prompting deeds and producing results that the world has ascribed to other causes. This feeling was her love for her husband, a love that was never requited. The fact has been too much overlooked in the general interest that surrounds his superficially romantic attachment to Diane de Poitiers. Catherine. "slow to complain," kept her secret with dignity.

It is, in truth, impossible not to admir the dignity with which she bore this trial "She never reproached him, and she served him faithfully, with a wistful and thankless devotion. Perhaps the primitive woman in her came out most clearly in this-that she kept her love for the one being who spurned her. Henri even roused fear in her, and this caused a certain shyness which made her awkward in his presence and probably prevented her from pleasing the naturally taciturn King. But her sentiment influenced her life in ways that have hardly been recognized. It kept her from rebelling against his wishes, even when for her they meant indignity; and, had it not been for this attachment, she would not have waited for his death to oust Diane de Poitiers." It was not till she was a widow that she told her trouble to the one

daughter whom she loved, Elizabeth of Spain. The letter is the only bit of selfrevelation amid the multitude of papers that make up Catherine's correspondence. As such it is a precious human document touching enough from such a woman "M'amye," she wrote, "commend yourself very much to God, for you have seen me of old as contented as you are now and believing that I should never have any trouble but this one, that I was not loved in the way I wished by the King, your father, who doubtless honored me beyond my deserts. But I loved him so much that I was always afraid of him, as you know well enough. And now God has taken him away from me."

IV.

Diane de Poitiers, Catherine's successful

rival, was nearly twenty years older. She was almost 37 when in 1536 she first met Catherine's husband, who was then barely 20. She was old enough to be his mother. How, then, did she manage to captivate him and hold him subjugated until his accidental death in 1559? A beauty Diane was not. Her lover himself, in his most fervid moments, never pretended that she was so. The author of this book has found it curious to compare the writers of Diane's own time, or immediately after, with one another, and to discover how, with more or less evasion, they all agree about her. Brantome, the professional liar, to whom every great lady was a paragon, is the only one who mentions her beauty. "I saw Madame la Duchesse de Valentinois," he says, "when she was 70, as fair of countenance and as amiable as when she was 30. Unfortunately for his veracity, she died at 64. Other writers are more truthful, though discreet. "She came into the King's life," writes a Venetian, "when he was only Dauphin. He has loved her dearly, and loves her still, old though she be. She has, it must be said, never used paint, yet (perhaps by virtue of the minute pains she takes) she is very far from appearing as old as she is. A French chronicler is less considerate. "It was a grievous thing," said he, "to see a young prince adore a faded face, covered with wrinkles and a head fast turning gray and eyes which had grown dim and were even sometimes red." This rather unkind description is borne out by some Latin verses written when she was 38, about eighteen months after her first meeting with Henri They begin not overcomplimentarily; nor, for all their elegance, do they spare her white hair or her wrinkles. It is true, nevertheless, that many women no more beautiful than she have been of a temperament so romantic that they have woven around themselves a sort of aureole, a web of glamour and of mystery. Here again has legend been at work, this time upon Diane, and here again, according to our author, the legend is unwarranted by facts. The truth is that Diane de Poitiers was not in the least romantic or poetic, but the mos matter of fact woman in the world-as practical as only a French woman can be

and utterly absorbed in concrete things. The secret of Diane's influence over Catherine's husband is, after all, not inscrutable. She was the first to find out and to draw forth his latent powers, powers that his father had never discerned and that he himself had never realized, though he suffered from all the discomfort of unexpressed and unused energies. Diane her self had sufficient penetration to see that his gloom was the gloom of a concentrated nature. He was inarticulate; she taught him to speak. He was awkward and morose from diffidence; she gave him self-confidence and success. Above all, he needed affection. His father, absorbed in his eldest son, had never liked the second. I do not care for dreamy, sullen, sleepy children," he once said of Henri. His mother, who might have found out what was in him, died while he was still a child. Diane de Poitiers was the first woman to him any tenderness-passion, devotion, leaned forth in response. While she was making a man of him she was also making poet: the lyrics addressed to her were fer ut fervent, and were all written in his own delicate hand. She was much more intent on making a king, however, and if one source of her power lay in his need of affection, another, as potent, lay in his need for

In a word, Diane de Poitiers found Cather ine's husband a morose and tonguetied boy. She evoked in him a man of sagacity and force, a monarch. She was unique it this respect, that, from first to last she conducted the education of a king Touching this singular historical phenom enon our author remarks: "Perhaps no woman, before or after, has formed a ruler as completely as Diane de Poitiers formed Henri II., though had Louis XIV. been younger when he first met Mme. de Main tenon, that great lady would have vied with her. It might even be said that few women have more completely formed any man or kept a steadier hold upon him." The illegitimate alliance of Henri II. and Diane de Poitiers has become such a classic of historical scandal, has been so overlaid with gossip and political considerations that its ardor and its indestructibility have been too much overlooked. Our author for her part, suggests that it should count as one of the rare things in biographypassion that lasted, rarer still among royal personages, who are more apt to deal in

gallant episodes than in faithful love. Careful investigation has shown that there was absolutely no ground for the charge that Diane de Poitiers had irregular relations with François I. before she became the mistress of his son. It has also proved impossible to discover in her life anything to justify the imputation of infidelity to Henri II. She always led the existence of a faithful wife, whether a legitimate or an illegitimate one, and the absurd report of a liaison with the poet Marot was never really believed. It was important that the author of this volume should examine these accusations, for had they proved well founded they would have affected materially the place of Diane in history Had she been a light woman she would have lost half of her interest. It is certainly a remarkable fact that Henri II. should have been unwaveringly loved and served by two women of stainless loyalty-who have, notwithstanding, gone down to posterity as types of immorality.

## Catherine the Great of Russia.

For upward of a hundred years French writers, recalling, doubtless, the sympathetic attitude of Voltaire, Diderot and the Encyclopedists toward the "Empress of the North," have shown themselves keenly interested in Catherine II. of Russia, surnamed the Great. As lately as nine years ago, M. C. de Larivière devoted a volume o Catherine, and classed her with Frederick the Great of Prussia, Maria Theresa and Voltaire among the real masters of the eighteenth century. In England, on the other hand, this extraordinary personage had been much neglected. An attempt to renair this neglect, so far as some of the aspects of her life are concerned, is now made in a book entitled "The Courtships of Catherine the Great, "by PHILIP W. SERGEANT their normal accessories. These mys—a widow that she told her trouble to the one late scholar of Trinity College, Oxford (J. P. There are those who, in view of her multeries have surrounded her with a legendconfidence she had in the world, the only Lippincott Company). The author assures titudinous love affairs, have suggested a considerable number of descriptions by late scholar of Trinity College, Oxford (J. P.

us that he has no thought of competing with the great pioneering work which has been done elsewhere, notably by M. Walisseuski, and that this book would never have been penned had that writer's biography, with its tremendous wealth of quotations from sources not accessible in England, been likely to fall within the range of the ordinary reader. Mr. Sergeant acknowledges profound indebtedness to that investigator, and also to Mesers. Jauffert and Rambaud, but not on that account has he deemed himself relieved from the duty of consulting, wherever it was possible, the original authorities, including, conspicuously, Masson's contemporary "Mémoires Secrets," and the "Life of Catherine II." by the Rev. W. T. Tooke, who in 1774 became chaplain to the English factory at St. Petersburg. We have no intention of wearying the reader by here following in detail the monotonous and nauseous record of Catherine's innumerable lovers, but it seems worth while to note what the author has to say about her connection with the death of her husband, Peter III., and to outline some of the conclusions to which the study of her character and career has

There is no doubt that Sophia-the daugher of a brother of the ruler of the petty German principality of Anhalt-Zerbst, who did not assume the name of Catherine until she became a member of the Greek Church, after being selected by the Czarina Elizabeth for the bride of her nephew Peter, the grandson of Peter the Great, and the recognized heir of the Russian Empire-was privy to the conspiracy by which her husband, Peter III., was deposed. It is also indisputable that such excuse as may be furnished by the law of self-preservation she had. For, had Peter III, been allowed to rule any longer, he would have divorced her and put her to death, or at least sent ner into exile. It is, however, a matter of controversy whether her unfortunate huscand was murdered in the confinement to which he was condemned and whether, f he was assassinated, she had any foreknowledge of the plot to commit the crime. According to the official report, Peter's ieath was due to apoplexy, but the almost universal belief, expressed both at the time and in the works of later writers, was that the deposed Emperor was murdered. Alexis Orlof was generally accused of the deed, and our author concedes that, if the leath was unnatural, probabilities point to Alexis Orlof as the author of it; but he holds that all elaborate accounts of a piteous strangling or poisoning scene, such as a lew writers furnish, may be dismissed as fictitious. If Orlof or another did kill Peter, the crime was accomplished without witnesses. Peter was a weakling whom it would be easy to put out of existence. It is obvious that, if there was murder

done, Catherine's knowledge or ignorance of it becomes of great importance in an estimate of her character. The Prince de Ligne, who knew her well, took pains to establish her complete innocence, and questioned the Emperor's old servants, whose perfect liberty to tell what had occurred struck him as the best possible proof of Catherine's total ignorance of the deed. 'Apparently," wrote the Prince de Ligne, she does not know that the crime is imputed to her |this could hardly be quite correct]; the lies," he adds, after mentioning how her detractors heaped crime on crime as hers, "of lackeys or of souls as hase have endeavored to dim the luster of that immortal reign. One only needed to see the Empress, to listen to her, to know her life story, to be sure of her goodness, justice and unvarying kindness." terms in which this absolution was pronounced are justly described by the author of this volume as excessive, but it is at the same time pointed out that the Prince de Ligne, though a partizan, was anything but a simpleton. "His view," says Mr. Sergeant, "in the matter of Peter's death is, in effect, that of every trustworthy judge contemporary with Catherine. The accusation against her of ordering her husband's assassination is only put forth by the scandal loving, the disreputable or the utterly prejudiced."

A question still remains to be answered, namely, whether, although Peter III. may have been slain entirely without her knowledge, Catherine did not condone the deed when it had been done. Our author admits that she made no attempt to punish any one. She was satisfied with the report made by the physicians who conducted the post-mortem examination, and took no steps to reassure a hesitating public, while she forbade any discussion of the event. There is trustworthy evidence for the assertion that "her manner on receipt of the news which Alexis Orlof brought to St. Petersburg as fast as he could ride on the day the death occurred was against her. She was just about to make her appearance at court and did appear there with a tranquil air but immediately afterward shut herself up with Orlof, Panin and others to deliberate whether the Senate and people should be told at once. It was determined to wait day, and Catherine, after dining as usual,

held an evening court. "Next day the news was made known, ostensibly for the first time, to Catherine as she sat at table, whereupon she rose with her eyes full of tears, as though she had just heard of the catastrophe, dismissing those sitting at the meal with her, shut herself up, and for several days showed signs of profound grief." This is Tooke's account, and our author sees no reason to doubt its correctness. It is certain that in the proclamation announcing her hus band's death from violent colic, she bade her people pray sincerely to God for the repose of Peter's soul, but asked them to consider the unexpected and sudden death as "an especial effect of the providence of God, whose impenetrable decrees are bringing about, for us, for our throne and

for our country, things only known to His holy will." In Mr. Sergeant's perhaps too charitable opinion, a fair deduction from the evidence is that Catherine did not either order o onsent to Peter's removal, but that, after he had died, probably by foul means, she accepted the situation, and did not institute too minute an inquiry, which, though it would clear her of all suspicion, might necessitate the punishment of one or more whom she could not afford to punish. She published a version of her husband's end which could not be disproved (and cannot now be demonstrated false), made a decent show of a grief which she could not be expected to feel, and for the rest, imposed silence, so far as such an imposition was practicable, on discussion. Thereby, of course, she gave the scandalmongers handle, but preserved her throne. Our author thinks that, if we cannot consider Voltaire's verdict sufficient or seemly-I know that she is reproached with some trifles about her husband, but these are family affairs with which I do not meddle -full weight should be allowed to all arguments drawn from her precarious position "Her strategy was the only strategy which could insure her victory in a situation of immense difficulty and danger."

There are those who, in view of her mul

that the case of Catherine II. was one for a pathologist, an alienist. The hypothesis of a sexual perversity amounting to mania, however, is scarcely reconcilable with the lovers, characterized her conduct. Apparnormal; for in some familiar lines he seems subjugation by two master cravings:

In men we various ruling passions find; In women, two almost divide the kind; Those only, fixed, they first or last obey

The love of pleasure and the love of sway Our author recalls that Masson, in his Mémoires Secrets," makes a remark of similar import when he says of Catherine: "She had two passions which only died with her: her love for man, which degenerated into libertinage, and her love of glory, which degenerated into vanity. Other students of her career have found it hard to make Catherine's behavior with regard to favorites harmonize with her general character. M. Waliszeuski, after stating that her shameless sensuality seems an isolated phenomenon, unconnected with the rest of her temperament, proceeds to say that this is so perhaps only in appearance and that there may be a psychological connection between this sensuality and the intellectual culture of one who loved to call herself a pupil of Voltaire. He sees in the Empress of the North a constant lofty cynicism, not to be explained merely on the

ground of a physiological anomaly. Our author for his part observes that there was in Catherine's attitude toward the institution of favoritism a constant disposition to treat it as a matter of course. When she refers to it in her writings, she neither particularly defends nor yet blames herself. "She seems," says Mr. Sergeant, from the beginning to have been nonmoral in her point of view on the question. Her judgment, or rather absence of judgment, on herself, in her own memoirs, though these were written at a distance from the events which they describe, is in strict keeping with her actions therein portrayed." Her mental attitude remained consistent; though, as she advanced in life, she grew less restrained. Our author does not concur, however, with M. Jauffert in imputing to Potemkin (called in this book Patiomkin) the corrupting influence It appears that this writer, after attributing to Gregory Orlof a loyal character, elevated spirit and devoted affection, which encouraged in Catherine a certain reserve, makes Potemkin responsible for her deterioration, by intoxicating her with incense, surrounding her with lies, and by his perverse genius, malignity and depravity steeping her Court in intrigues and coarse pleasures. Mr. Sergeant con-cedes that Potemkin "exercised no moral restraint on Catherine no more, in fact, than Orlof," but he holds that "she was her wn corrupter, and her conduct grew worse by its own influence. She might well have applied to herself that favorite maxim of Casanova: Nemo læditur nisi a se ipso

one can only be self-debauched. The curious and at first sight contradictory fact is brought out in the book before us that with all Catherine's disregard of general notions of propriety in her system of favoritism there went a certain severity on moral questions. It was well known at her court that no scandalous or licentious talk, no attacks on morals or religion, could find favor with the Empress. The Comte de Ségur even annoyed her once by reciting some verses which he confesses to have been a little free, though they had been well received by virtuous and amiable ladies in Paris. After mentioning what might seem to seme an anomaly, Ségur quotes remark made by his brother on the contrast between the indulgence permitted by chaste women and the apparent severity of those who are less perfect: "Where virtue reigns a show of nice decorum is superfluous

There is unanimous testimony that the behavior of Catherine toward those whom she had elevated to the post of favorite was the most generous possible. We are not here referring only to the way in which she heaped gifts on the men of her choice, but to the forbearance and magnanimity with which, when they had offended her by infidelity-though she dismissed themshe did so with fresh gifts and without any marks of anger. Ségur was impelled by her treatment of Mamonof, after the latter's unfaithfulness, to write: "When Catherine is drawn her weaknesses are the shadows of the picture, but at least they leave he generosity of her character undarkened. Few women invested with absolute power would have shown so much moderation when they saw their sentiments betrayed and their self-love wounded." Masson when he considers Catherine's gentleness, is moved to remark how far removed is her conduct from that of Elizabeth of Engand, whom he accuses of "cutting off the heads of her favorites and her rivals." Mr. Sergeant, for his part, cheerfully admits that from this point of view Catherine's behavior was far better than was that of the daughter of Henry VIII. But he notes that Sainte-Beuve, with characteristic casuistry, when he also contrasts Catherine with Elizabeth and Christina of Sweden, holds that the former's practise of heaping gifts on the discarded lover rather than assassinating him really told against her, since it showed openly how great was her scorn of men and nations. Discarded lovers would hardly be expected to take Sainte-Beuve's view of the matter. Our author, for his part, would not deny

that Catherine exhibited a measure of cynicism with regard to public opinion. He contends, however, that the changes made by her in the post of favorite do not indicate a contempt for the occupiers of the post, but that her tendency lay all in the opposite direction. She always looked at the romantic side of every man-not only of her lovers but also of all who served ner-and when her fancy was taken she busied herself with investing the object with the qualities which her brain told her would alone justify her in conferring the onors which she was wont to bestow. Mr. Sergeant acutely says that this faculty or power of judging and this lack of discrimination, exhibited by one whose mind was usually so clear, seems to have been the enalty which Catherine paid for her want of control over her heart. Russia naturally suffered for Catherine's errors; that Russia did not suffer more was due to the fact that at least one of her idols-Potemkin, who governed the empire during a large part of her reign-was to some extent what Catherine tried to imagine him to be Catherine herself had cause to regret that her sense of masculine beauty, which led her mind so astray, was not more under her control. She was not one to neglect posterity's verdict; on the contrary, it was to this that she appealed in much of what she wrote. Concerning this point, our author says: "One might almost think that Catherine trusted in the justice of posterity to weigh her merits against her weaknesses and to decide that the former outbalanced the latter. This is what posterity has done, or at least such portion of posterity as has a judgment which it is worth while to gain."

As to Catherine's personal appearance,

eyewitnesses have been preserved. There s almost unanimous testimony that he 'eyes' were blue: Masson calls them grisc'air: only one makes them brown, with singular sobriety and sanity which, in all a bluish tinge in certain lights. To the respects except in her relations with her tint of her hair the terms brown, chestnut and auburn are applied. In the days when ently the poet Pope, who in his way was a she was still Grand Duchess she was depsychologist, would have pronounced her picted as having a noble figure, majestic gait, graceful deportment and a royal to have foreshadowed, as typical, her air. "In the union of her head and neck was wonderful beauty. Her brow was large and open, her mouth was set off by beautiful teeth, her nose was aquiline"-Mme. Vigée-Lebrun, the painter, and Poniatowsky described it as "quite Greek." The English chaplain, Rev. W. Tooke; who saw her ten years after her accession to the throne, observed that "she was of moderate stature, but well proportioned, and, as she carried her head very high, she appeared rather tall." The Prince de Ligne agreed that one scarcely noted that she was short. His own description of Catherine as she was at the age of 50 iwells on the characteristics of her physlognomy, in which it required no Lavater; he said, to find "genius, justice, courage, depth, equanimity, sweetness, calm and decision.

### Immortal Will-Attitudes.

Prof. Hugo Münsterberg in his small book entitled "The Eternal Life" (Houghton) Mifflin & Co.) says that past, present and future mean simply attitudes of the personality toward its object. Only time, instant, is real, and the reality of the present excludes the reality of everything which precedes; the past must have become unreal when the present is real, and the existence of the present must have become unreal when the future will be real. Is life worth living for two heart beats long all that we experience in the first has become non-existent, and thus unreal

in the second? This seems to make out; as the publisher's notice says, that there is no past and no future, but an eternal now. We trust that we may be allowed to continue to say that there was a past and will be a future, for the sake of convenience. We hesitate to ask whether it may not be that there is a past, owing to the workings of memory. The Government weather prophet has abundantly satisfied us of the unreality of futures. We know no more efficient demonstrator of the truth of Prof.

Munsterberg's contention. It is further said here that what we call numan history is a mighty system of willreference. The whole historical configuration of our politics and law and science and art and religion is a system of williemands. History means the will-connections of free personalities. This definition of history we have quoted as likely to be of assistance in understanding what the proessor says of life. He says:

"My life as a casual system of physical and psychical processes, which lies spread out in time between the dates of my birth and of my death, will come to an end with my ast breath; to continue it, to make it go on till the earth falls into the sun, or a billion times longer, would be without any value, as that kind of life which is nothing but the mechanical occurrence of physiclogical and psychological phenomena had as such no ultimate value for me or for you or for any one at any time. But my real life as a system of interrelated will-attitudes has nothing before or after, because it is beyond time. It is independent of birth and death, because it cannot be related to the biological events; it is not born, and will not die; it is immortal; all possible thinkable time is enclosed in it; it is eternal."

Such, then, are life, reality, immortality and history. A book conspicuously in the philosophical form and spirit. It has greatly nterested us.

Dr. W. W. Keen's Addresses. A much wider public than the medical profession will be interested in Dr. William Williams Keen's Addres Papers" (W. B. Saunders & Co., Philadelphia). Dr. Keen, the leading American authority in surgery, has had frequent occasion to speak on matters of general concern connected with his profession, on public occasions and in periodicals, and it is

these utterances that are here collected. We find, for instance, an entertaining account adorned with quaint illustrations of the early history of practical anatomy, his surgical reminiscences of the civil war and the remarkable article on the "Progress of Surgery in the Nineteenth Century" that was published in THE SUN five years ago. Then there are historical and philosophical views of the medical profession delivered on academic occasions, and lighter, popular expositions of advances in science contributed to literary periodicals. The range of topics is wide, the presentation authoritative and the "Addresses" in this form will be welcomed by all concerned in the advance of science. Opponents of vivisection will find it hard to get around Dr. Keen's justification of that method of investigation.

# Dr. Nordenskjold in the Antarctic.

It is a rattling good book of adventure that Dr. N. Otto G. Nordenskjöld and Dr. Joh. Gunnar Andersson with their coleagues have put together in "Antarctica" (Macmillans). The scientific results of the expedition will come much later, as it will take time, naturally, to put them in order. The geographical results may seem rather meager, considering the risks run by the explorers. Here we have the narrative of the expedition during the two winters it spent in the snows, at the back of Louis Philippe Land.

The separation of the expedition made two narratives necessary. Dr. Nordenskjöld tells the main story of the party that wintered in the south. Dr. Andersson. who joined in the second year, tells of the endeavor to reach his companions; another comrade relates the story of the loss of the Antarctic, and still another the rescue by the Argentine cruiser. There is a breeziness and picturesqueness about the whole story that distinguishes it from most narratives of the kind, and the occasional quaintness of the English adds flavor to it. The illustrations are many and attractive.

## A Duck Hunter's Luck.

From the San Francisco Chronicle. "If there is one thing of which I have ab solutely no knowledge, it is hunting and fishing," remarked John S. Inglis. "I never caught a fish or killed a bird in my life, and suppose I never will. I couldn't tell you the difference between a striped bass and a mallard duck, unless it came in on a platter. But I have a friend who is a sportsman. You never saw such a keen sportsman in your life. He has a big roomful of guns and fishing tackle and all kinds of sporting paraphernalia He used to worry the life out of me with his persistent invitations to go hunting and fishing. Finally I agreed to go duck hunting with him. He provided all the regalia. Among other things, he ordered a lot of shells from a downtown gun store, and I was to go and get the shells and pack them in my grip. I got the package from the gun store and we went to Alviso. We were proceeding up a slough in a small boat in the cool of the up a slough is a small boat in the cool of the early morning when we ran into a million ducks.

"Open up that package of shells, veiled my friend.

"Topened the package. It contained twenty-fie pounds of assorted fish hooks, I haven't been duck hunting since."